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Boston University

News & Notes

Boston University School of Medicine



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NEW SURGERY CHIEF
AT BUSM, UH NAMED

Robert Wayne Hobson II, M.D., a nationally recognized general and vascular surgeon, has been named the James B. Utley Professor of Surgery and chairman of the Division of Surgery at BUSM, and also surgeon-in-chief at University Hospital. He formerly was professor and vice-chairman of surgery and director of the General Surgery Residency Program at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, New Jersey Medical School. Hobson's appointment ends a two-year search during which time Peter Mozden, M.D., has been acting chief of general surgery.

Hobson will continue as director of a \$2.7-million multicenter prospective study funded by the Veterans Administration on the importance of asymptomatic carotid occlusive disease in the development of stroke. In addition, he has a strong background in trauma, having participated in the development of a trauma center at UMDNJ-NJMS.

Hobson received his medical degree from George Washington University School of Medicine in 1963 and served an internship in internal medicine at Tripler General (Army) Hospital in Honolulu. He is a member of numerous surgical societies, including the American Surgical Association, the Society of University Surgeons, the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma, the International Society for Cardiovascular Surgery, the Society of Vascular Surgery, the Association for Academic Surgery (AAS) and the Association of VA Surgeons (AVAS). He is a past president of the AAS and a past vice-president of the AVAS.

DUNN APPOINTED ASSISTANT
DEAN OF MINORITY AFFAIRS

Van Howard Dunn, M.D., M.P.H., medical director of the Harvard Street Neighborhood Health Center in Dorchester, recently was named assistant dean of minority affairs at BUSM. Dunn took over the post from Patricia Whitley, M.D., who left the School last summer to become assistant dean for clinical instruction for third- and fourth-year students at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta. Dunn continues as medical director of the Health Center on a part-time basis.

Dunn is a graduate of Cornell University Medical College and Harvard School of Public Health. He is an associate of the American College of Physicians and a member of the Society of Medical Decision Making and the Society for Research and Education in Primary Care Internal Medicine.

FIRST EDDIE MCCARTHY
TENNIS CUP TO BE AWARDED

A School of Medicine tennis cup, named in honor of Eddie McCarthy who has been a friend to the School and to students for 26 years, will be dedicated in a special ceremony being planned for early this year. The first BUSM mixed-doubles tennis tournament was held last spring and summer, according to its organizers Carlos Abreu, GSGD '88, and Stephen Plotnick '88. The students said they wanted to dedicate the cup to McCarthy as a symbol of their appreciation of his efforts on behalf of the entire student body.

The final match was played in September at the Case Center on the Charles River Campus. Six-year students Helen Hootsmans '88 and Frank Lee '88 defeated William Nannery '88 and his partner to become the first winners inscribed on the Cup, which will be exhibited in the School's lobby.

ANATOMY DEPARTMENT RECEIVES
GRANT FOR AGING RESEARCH

The Department of Anatomy recently received a grant totaling approximately \$1.3 million from the National Institute of Aging to support research on changes with age in the brain and central nervous system in animal models, according to Alan Peters, Ph.D., chairman of the Department. The three-year award is being carried out in association with the Yerkes Regional Primate Research Center in Atlanta. The primary function of the studies is to examine the rhesus monkey as a model for human aging, said Peters.

Research projects under way include investigations of changes in behavior as a result of age, particularly with regard to memory and hearing acuity, and relating these alterations to changes in the structure of the brain. Other studies are looking at the development of senile dementias, changes in the number and nature of neurons with age, changes in the spinal cord and peripheral nerves, and biochemical markers of aging.

AFFILIATIONS WITH HONG KONG
MEDICAL SCHOOLS ESTABLISHED

Two more affiliations with Chinese medical schools recently were formalized and the programs generously endowed by a \$600,000 contribution from Hong Kong businessman and philanthropist Wing-Tat Lee (SMG '54), according to Joseph Vitale, Sc.D., M.D., associate dean for international health and director of the BUSM Nutrition Education Program. Exchange programs for students and faculty have been established between BUSM and the faculties of medicine at The Chinese University of Hong Kong and The University of Hong Kong, two separate institutions. In addition, BUSM also has formal agreements for exchange programs with three medical insitutions on mainland China.

"To initiate the affiliation, we are holding the first conference among the three schools in September in Hong Kong," said Vitale. The conference will be on "Therapeutic Trends for the 1990s" and will include such topics as cardiovascular disease, diseases of the gastrointestinal tract, kidneys and puluminary system.

To date, eight faculty from the School of Medicine are planning to attend the Sept. 12 through 15 meeting. In addition, three recent BUSM graduates now completing their residencies will be spending three months each in China under

the new agreement. Two will be working in the field of gastroenterology and one in immunology of parasitic organisms, according to Vitale. Currently, two Chinese scholars are working at the Medical Center under the formal agreement, he said.

ZEISEL RECEIVES
FUTURE LEADER AWARD

Stephen H. Zeisel, M.D., an assistant professor of pathology and pediatrics, has been chosen one of three recipients to receive the 1986-1987 Future Leader Awards of the International Life Sciences Institute-Nutrition Foundation. A committee of 16 scientists selected Zeisel's research in nutrient metabolism as one of three showing the most promise in the field of nutrition.

The Future Leader Award provides support of \$30,000 over a two-year period. Zeisel also recently won an award of more than \$125,000 from the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Department of Agriculture for his work on the human requirements for the nutrient choline.

FINE NAMED DIRECTOR
OF GERIATRIC PROGRAM

Richard Fine, Ph.D., an associate professor of physiology and biochemistry, has been named director of the Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center (GRECC), located at the Bedford VA Medical Center. GRECCs have been set up in VA facilities throughout the country to develop demonstration programs that can be used to strengthen geriatric training of physicians and other health-care professionals, according to Fine. Funded by the Veterans Administration central office in Washington, D.C., the Bedford VA GRECC has been designated to study aging-related neurological disorders, particularly Alzheimer's disease. In addition, the hospital runs a unit for the care and treatment of people with the disorder. Research under way within the GRECC unit is aimed at elucidating the various components of diagnosis and treatment of the disease. Additional studies are concerned with such other aging-related disorders as rheumatism and arthritis, said Fine.

NEW LASER EQUIPMENT BEING
DEVELOPED IN DERMATOLOGY

A new type of laser that could revolutionize the treatment of certain facial birthmarks and vascular tumors is being developed by researchers in the Department of Dermatology in conjunction with Candela Corp., a Natick-based manufacturer of laser equipment. Oon Tian Tot, M.D., an assistant professor of dermatology who recently joined the BUSM faculty, has been working with the company for the past three years on the development of the Candela Flashlamp-Pump Tuneable Dye Laser. The company has agreed to give her the laser as a long-term loan and will continually modify the equipment as the results of her experiments warrant.

"It is a very versatile laser that allows the user to choose the desired (light) wavelength by using different dyes of specific wavelengths," said Tot. The advantages are that it can be used for more than one type of task and that it can be so exactly targeted as to practically eliminate damage done to surrounding tissues.

Tot's research primarily has focused on using light at wavelengths of 577 nanometers, which is one of the three absorption bands of oxyhemoglobin.

Using the laser prototype, she is able to direct the beam through the skin's surface to the blood vessels below without scarring. Tot is continuing investigations of laser/tissue interactions and is applying some of her findings to therapy for port-wine stains. While her results are still preliminary, Tot is hopeful the machine will be a marketable product next year.

ART BY MEDICAL SCIENTISTS
DISPLAYED AT BU GALLERY

An exhibit celebrating the creative side of medical scientists opened this month with a wine and cheese reception at the George Sherman Union Gallery on the Charles River Campus. The show featured works by several School of Medicine students, faculty, staff and alumni, and contains paintings, drawings, sculptures, silkscreens, pottery and photographs. Katherine Phaneuf '88, artist and student organizer of the event, said she got the idea from talking with a number of fellow students who "were talented in the visual arts."

The following members of the Medical Center community were represented in the exhibit: Norman Scotch, Ph.D., director of the School of Public Health; Lori Messenger, a biomedical illustrator in the BUMC Educational Media Support Center; Owen McNamara, director of the Office of Informational Services; Michael Grodin, M.D., an assistant professor of pediatrics and social and behavioral sciences; Lynne Brodsky '83; Donna Washington '88; Alison Sims '88; Gary Schatzberg GSGD '88; Marjet Cordon '88; Josh Benditt, chief medical resident at the Boston VA Medical Center; Herbert Kupchik, Ph.D., an associate professor of microbiology and pathology; Nathan Fineberg '30; Lloyd Aiello '88; Atania Naporn '87 and Rachael Powsner, a staff physician in the Department of Nuclear Medicine at University Hospital.

BUSM COMPUTER
LABORATORY OPENS

BUSM recently opened a Laboratory for Instructional Technology (LIT) that will make available to students and faculty an array of computer hardware and software that may be used as instructional tools or for personal use, according to Terry S. Field, director of the LIT. Equipment for the Laboratory, which is located in the basement of the Instructional Building adjacent to the cafeteria, was made possible through donations from Hewlett-Packard and several BUSM parents.

Courses are being offered on such subjects as applications of computers in medicine, and database construction and use. Workshops and seminars will be held to introduce students and faculty to specific software packages and external databases. Telephone lines that will give users access to the computer network at the Charles River Campus are being installed, and plans for access to a bank of computer simulation programs at Massachusetts General Hospital are under way.

According to Field, students and faculty are exploring the use of video discs for storing data in the fields of histology and pathology, video programs to support instruction in the basic medical sciences, digitized audio as a means of storing, analysing and learning to interpret heart sounds, and artificial intelligence capabilities to help students acquire problem-solving and decision-making skills. The Laboratory also will bring together interested faculty and students to produce materials specifically supporting the curriculum at BUSM.

There will be 30 portable machines and 12 PCs available daily in the Laboratory or for rent up to one week. For further information about the LIT, contact Field at x5147 (L-103), or Arthur Culbert, Ph.D., assistant dean for student affairs and administrator of Lab services at x4194 (L-102).

LIBRARY AUTOMATING CATALOG,
ACQUISITION CAPABILITIES

The BUSM Alumni Medical Library will be automating its services this year to provide students, faculty and staff with a computerized card catalog of all Boston University libraries, according to Irene Christopher, chief librarian at School of Medicine. According to Christopher, Boston University has signed a contract with Carlyle Co., a California-based computer manufacturer that will be installing terminals in all the libraries. The system is now being tested at Mugar Library, the main library on the Charles River Campus, and medical students and personnel are invited to use the terminals in place there.

According to Christopher, when the system is fully implemented, the card catalogs of all the libraries will be available from each location and users will be able to quickly find out which library carries a particular book or periodical. Eventually, the University expects to have an acquisition system in place as well for placing new orders. The computer terminals are scheduled to arrive at the Alumni Medical Library during the spring and summer, and the system is expected to be completely in place by September.

CME COURSES OFFERED IN
SURGERY, MEDICINE, RADIOLOGY

The Department of Continuing Education has announced several winter courses covering the fields of laser and orthopedic surgery, pediatric radiology and internal medicine. BUSM faculty members from each of these areas will participate.

"The Problem Foot and Ankle" is scheduled for Jan. 23 through 29 at the Exelaris Hyatt Regency in Cancun, Mexico. Participants are urged to bring case studies for discussion with faculty members. "Controversies in Internal Medicine" will be held Jan. 27 through 31 at the Stratton Mountain Inn in Stratton Mountain, Vt. The course will contain sessions on cardiovascular disorders, endocrine disorders, and psychiatric and infectious disease issues.

"Endoscopic Laser Therapy Update" will be the topic on Feb. 2 through 4 at the Contemporary Resort of Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, Fla. The course is designed to introduce the practicing physician to the field of laser therapy. The fifth annual course on "Sports Medicine and Orthopedic Trauma" will be presented Feb. 3 through 7 at The Inn at the Mountain, Stowe, Vt. The course will feature sessions on cold-weather injuries, fractures, and injuries to the knee and the upper extremities. "Pediatric Radiology in the Emergency Room" will be held Feb. 7 through 9 at the Contemporary Resort of Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, Fla. This course will review the basic principles of the care of children in an emergency setting, and cover the use of various imaging procedures ranging from simple radiography to CT-scan evaluation.

BRIEFLY NOTED

A search committee for a new chairman and chief of the Department of Otolaryngology, has been established. Robert Krane, M.D., chairman of the Department of Urology, has been appointed head of the committee....William Freeman, director

of Development at BUSM, recently was designated a Certified Fund Raising Executive by the National Society of Fund Raising Executives in Washington, D.C.....Deborah Fein, M.D., an associate professor of psychiatry, has been elected to the board of directors of the League School. Located in Newtonville, Mass., the school is a private, nonprofit, state-approved program serving children diagnosed as having autism or related severe developmental disorders. Fein has done considerable research in this field over the past 10 years....Paul F. Vinger, M.D., a clinical assistant in ophthalmology, recently received the Man of Vision Award of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness. The award, which honors outstanding achievement in the field of sight preservation, was presented last fall at the Belmont Country Club in Belmont, Mass. Vinger is a nationally recognized authority on sports-related eye injuries and has devoted much of his career to the prevention of such injuries.

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